

International Women's Day to be marked with film screening, discussion



The global pandemic left many people around the world feeling isolated ? but, for nine women in different parts of the globe, filmmaking fostered some unique connections.

Working remotely together and independently, the results of this collaboration, the film 'One (Nine)', described as a 'timeless, multiversal experience of what it means to find connection in a time of isolation?', will be seen virtually in Aurora on Tuesday, March 8, to mark International Women's Day.

Produced by pUNK Films, the film will be available to registrants throughout the day before a panel discussion in the evening beginning at 7 p.m. with filmmaker Ingrid Veninger, filmmaker and climate activist Slater Jewell-Kemker, producer Karis Malszecki, and Nelia Pacheco, Chair of the Aurora Film Circuit.

'There is, of course, so much negative with the pandemic, but it has opened up many opportunities, especially for film,' says Ms. Pacheco. 'Through the virtual world of film festivals, I have had so much greater access because they have had to support their festivals in a different manner. I loved the idea of nine filmmakers across the world [coming together] and how they managed to put the film together is extraordinary, considering the circumstances.'

For Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration for the Aurora Public Library, coming together with the Aurora Film Circuit to present 'Nine (One)' was a perfect fit for International Women's Day.

'I found the whole concept really intriguing because here we were, all isolated because of the pandemic, and there were nine women filmmakers isolating in different parts of the world and yet they joined across the world to make a film apart, yet together. It focuses not so much only about the different countries but in all the different ways these women were approaching their craft. There was something I found really interesting in these shorts because they were so very different in terms of filming, storyline, mood and all those elements of film.'

'As a feminist, I have always believed in what I could accomplish as a woman, but all the research shows how women in particular benefit from collaboration over competition and how we can do so much together. I think as women and as collaborators, as shown in this film, shown in the panel, is? a celebration of International Women's Day and how we can come together and grow something

really beautiful.?

In this sense of collaboration, Ms. Pacheco says each of the nine short films ?really hold their own? and get the viewer thinking in different ways, including ?how they are managing the pandemic and honouring their craft at the same time.?

?Having that lifeline to continue is so important and having this film and this platform, and to be able to share it, I thought that was really big, too,? she says. ?For me, the film is the focus. It is more about the creativity for women in film and how they manage, how they navigate. How does the process come about for them? It is going to be very different for everyone.?

These are some of the threads Ms. Pacheco says she hopes to explore in the panel discussion, which will include one filmmaker from ?One (Nine)? and other filmmakers who are involved in the industry, exploring how women are involved in both production and in viewership.

?We wanted to have a balance, recognizing Ingrid's work and getting One (Nine) put together, and also the opportunity for women and film, their different focuses, and how they bring it to fruition,? says Ms. Pacheco. ?Film is about how it gets made. The end result is what you see on the screen, but the beauty, from my perspective, is how it gets made.?

Adds Ms. Mandelcorn: ?The end is not what you see when it is on the screen; the end is what it makes you think about after.?

This is a philosophy that holds true for Ms. Pacheco and the Aurora Film Circuit.

There can be a trigger within a film that sparks curiosity, she says, and a journey of understanding, whether that's a culture, a certain practice, or even a moment in time.

?I get that hunger of curiosity,? she says. ?Our whole theme at the Aurora Film Circuit is changing how you see the world through film and that is always the lens [I am using] when I am programming our films.

?It is always about finding a connection because we all know we're far more alike than different.?

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